

CLAIMS:

5 What is claimed is:

1. A method of allowing a device to be shared among
partitions of a logically partitioned system comprising
10 the steps of:

determining whether a requesting partition has
permission to use a device; and

15 automatically reassigning the device to the requesting
partition if the requesting partition has permission to
use the device.

2. The method of Claim 1 wherein the device is reassigned
20 to the requesting partition only if the device is
currently idle.

3. The method of Claim 2 wherein if the device is not idle
25 the requesting partition is notified that the device is
not idle.

4. The method of Claim 2 wherein after the requesting
partition has terminated using the device, it indicates
so.

30 5. The method of Claim 4 wherein upon indication that the
requesting device has terminated using the device, the

device is reassigned to the partition it was originally assigned.

6. A computer program product on a computer readable
5 medium for allowing a device to be shared among partitions of a logically partitioned system comprising:

10 code means for determining whether a requesting partition has permission to use a device; and

15 code means for automatically reassigning the device to the requesting partition if the requesting partition has permission to use the device.

7. The computer program product of Claim 6 wherein the device is reassigned to the requesting partition only if the device is currently idle.

20 8. The computer program product of Claim 7 wherein if the device is not idle the requesting partition is notified that the device is not idle.

25 9. The computer program product of Claim 7 wherein after the requesting partition has terminated using the device, it indicates so.

30 10. The computer program product of Claim 9 wherein upon indication that the requesting device has terminated using the device, the device is reassigned to the partition it was originally assigned.

11. An apparatus for allowing a device to be shared among partitions of a logically partitioned system comprising:

5 means for determining whether a requesting partition has permission to use a device; and

means for automatically reassigning the device to the requesting partition if the requesting partition has
10 permission to use the device.

12. The apparatus of Claim 11 wherein the device is reassigned to the requesting partition only if the device is currently idle.

15 13. The apparatus of Claim 12 wherein if the device is not idle the requesting partition is notified that the device is not idle.

20 14. The apparatus of Claim 12 wherein after the requesting partition has terminated using the device, it indicates so.

25 15. The apparatus of Claim 14 wherein upon indication that the requesting device has terminated using the device, the device is reassigned to the partition it was originally assigned.

30 16. A computer system for allowing a device to be shared among partitions of a logically partitioned system comprising:

SEARCHED
INDEXED
MAILED
FILED

at least one memory device for storing code data; and

5 at least one processor for processing the code data to determine whether a requesting partition has permission to use a device and to automatically reassign the device to the requesting partition if the requesting partition has permission to use the device.

10 17. The computer system of Claim 16 wherein the device is reassigned to the requesting partition only if the device is currently idle.

15 18. The computer system of Claim 17 wherein if the device is not idle the requesting partition is notified that the device is not idle.

20 19. The computer system of Claim 17 wherein after the requesting partition has terminated using the device, it indicates so.

25 20. The computer system of Claim 19 wherein upon indication that the requesting device has terminated using the device, the device is reassigned to the partition it was originally assigned.